

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/RA:HPRECHT:JD/NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
APPROVED BY D - DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER
H:RFLATEN (SUBS)
T:LBENSON (SUBS)
PM:RERICSON (SUBS)
NSC:MR.DENNEND (SUBS)
NEA:NVELIOTES

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE
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USMISSION SINAI IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE
USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 109614

UNCLAS STATE 109614

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, IS, EG, SA

SUBJECT: AIRCRAFT PROPOSALS TO CONGRESS

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER SECRETARY SENT APRIL 28
TO SENATOR CHURCH.

QUOTE: IN RESPONSE TO YOUR LETTER OF APRIL 21,
I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT THE PROPOSED SALES TO ISRAEL,
EGYPT, AND SAUDI ARABIA, WILL EACH BE THE SUBJECT OF A
SEPARATE CERTIFICATION TO CONGRESS. FURTHER, I RECOGNIZE
THAT SECTION 36(B) OF THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT CLEARLY
ENVISAGES CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF EACH OF THE PROPOSED
SALES ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL MERITS, AND THAT CONGRESS WILL
DO SO.

IN SUBMITTING THESE PROPOSED SALES TO CONGRESS ON THE SAME
DAY, THE ADMINISTRATION IS NOT ATTEMPTING TO PLACE CONDI-
TIONS OR INHIBITIONS ON THE SCOPE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL
REVIEW OR THE ACTION BY CONGRESS. INDEED, WE UNDERSTAND
THAT THE CONGRESS WILL WANT TO REVIEW THESE IMPORTANT
TRANSACTIONS SEPARATELY AND WITH GREAT CARE, AND WE STAND
READY TO FACILITATE THAT PROCESS.

AS CONGRESS CONSIDERS THESE MATTERS, I URGE YOU TO RECOGNIZE

THAT EACH OF THE GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED HAS A UNIQUE CONTRI-
BUTION TO MAKE AS WE MOVE TOWARD THE COMMON GOAL OF
ACHIEVING A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 109614

OUR CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH EACH IN THE FIELD OF
SECURITY, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL TO THEIR WELL-BEING AND
STABILITY, IS A CENTRAL PART OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH
THEM. IT IS MY VIEW THAT THESE GOVERNMENTS WILL ALL BE
MORE FORTHCOMING IN EFFORTS TO REACH A MIDDLE EAST SETTLE-
MENT IF THEIR BASIC SECURITY NEEDS ARE MET. IT IS MY
BEST JUDGMENT THAT THE PROPOSED SALES ARE IN THE NATIONAL
INTEREST.

WHILE WE ARE COGNIZANT OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE
CONGRESS UNDER SECTION 36(B), I AM SURE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND
THAT THE PRESIDENT MUST ALSO FULFILL HIS RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND THAT THIS REQUIRES
THAT HE RESERVE JUDGMENT ON THE ULTIMATE ACTION TO BE
TAKEN UNTIL HE HAS HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE
ACTION TAKEN BY THE CONGRESS ON EACH OF THE SEPARATE
CERTIFICATIONS. END QUOTE

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF NOTIFICATION TO
CONGRESS OF MIDDLE EAST AIRCRAFT SALES PROPOSALS READ TO
THE PRESS BY SECRETARY VANCE AT THE WHITE HOUSE APRIL 28.

BEGIN QUOTE THE ADMINISTRATION IS TODAY TRANSMITTING TO CONGRESS FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSALS TO SELL AIRCRAFT TO ISRAEL, EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA. AS INDICATED IN OUR INFORMAL NOTIFICATION LAST FEBRUARY, THE PROPOSED SALES INVOLVE 75 F-16 AIRCRAFT AND 15 F-15 AIRCRAFT TO ISRAEL, 50 F-5 AIRCRAFT TO EGYPT AND 60 F-15 AIRCRAFT TO SAUDI ARABIA.

THESE SALES ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR SEARCH FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THEY MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE OUR CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THREE KEY GOVERNMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. EACH OF THE THREE COUNTRIES HAS A UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE TO THE OBJECTIVE OF ACHIEVING A LASTING PEACE.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 109614

AS A NATION, WE HAVE A STRONG AND UNSHAKABLE COMMITMENT TO THE SECURITY OF ISRAEL. THE PROPOSED SALES TO ISRAEL WILL HELP PRESERVE ISRAEL'S ABILITY TO DEFEND ITSELF.

THE PROPOSED SALES TO EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA HAVE BEEN BASED UPON CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF HOW BEST TO MEET THEIR DEFENSE NEEDS WHILE MAINTAINING THE MILITARY BALANCE IN THE REGION. THESE TRANSACTIONS WILL ENHANCE THE CONFIDENCE IN AND FRIENDSHIP TOWARD THE UNITED STATES ON THE PART OF EACH OF THESE TWO COUNTRIES WITH WHICH WE SHARE VITAL MUTUAL INTERESTS.

THE PROPOSED SALES MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE UNITED STATES TO MAINTAIN OUR HISTORIC COMMITMENT TO THE SECURITY OF ISRAEL WHILE AT THE SAME TIME DEVELOPING CLOSER TIES WITH MODERATE ARAB NATIONS WHICH STRONGLY SUPPORT THE PEACE PROCESS. THEY REFLECT OUR BEST JUDGMENT AS TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES.

IN SUBMITTING THESE PROPOSED SALES TO CONGRESS ON THE SAME DAY, THE ADMINISTRATION IS NOT ATTEMPTING TO PLACE CONDITIONS ON THE SCOPE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OR THE ACTION BY CONGRESS. INDEED, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE CONGRESS WILL WANT TO REVIEW THESE IMPORTANT TRANSACTIONS SEPARATELY AND WITH GREAT CARE. WE STAND READY TO FACILITATE THAT PROCESS.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESIDENT FOR THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS REQUIRES THAT HE RESERVE JUDGMENT ON THE ULTIMATE ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNTIL HE HAS HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE ACTION TAKEN BY

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 109614

THE CONGRESS ON THE PROPOSALS ANNOUNCED TODAY. END QTE.

3. AT WHITE HOUSE BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE PRESS (ATTRIBUTED TO "ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL"), DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER MADE FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT PROCEDURE OF SUBMITTING PROPOSALS TO CONGRESS, WHICH YOU SHOULD USE WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

--A DIFFICULT PROCEDURAL ISSUE HAD DEVELOPED BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND THE EXECUTIVE OVER THE HANDLING OF ALL FOUR ARMS SALES PROPOSALS AS A PACKAGE. (ONE PROPOSAL FOR ISRAELI F-15'S AND ONE ISRAELI F-16'S; ONE FOR SAUDI F-15'S; ONE FOR EGYPTIAN F-5'S.)

--TO GET BEYOND THIS PROCEDURAL ISSUE AND OBTAIN CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROPOSALS, THE PRESIDENT HAD AGREED IN THE CHURCH LETTER TO SUBMIT FOUR SINGLE PROPOSALS.

--THE PRESIDENT, WHO HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, RESERVES JUDGMENT ON THE ULTIMATE ACTION TO BE TAKEN AFTER THE CONGRESS HAS ACTED ON THE PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TODAY.

--THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERS EACH PROPOSAL VIABLE AND VALID. TOGETHER ALL FOUR ARE PART OF A BALANCED AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE MIDDLE EAST. THE ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT CONSIDER THAT ONE CAN BE LOOKED AT IN ISOLATION FROM THE OTHERS.

--THE ADMINISTRATION NOW EXPECTS THE CONGRESS TO HOLD HEARINGS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROPOSALS. THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE IS TO BEGIN ITS HEARINGS MAY 9.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 109614

--BY THE END OF MAY, WHEN THE 30 DAYS GIVEN CONGRESS TO ACT IS OVER, MORE THAN 100 DAYS WILL HAVE ELAPSED SINCE THE SECRETARY FIRST ANNOUNCED THE PROPOSALS IN FEBRUARY. WE BELIEVE THE CONGRESS WILL HAVE SUFFICIENT TIME TO CONSIDER THESE PROPOSALS.

--THE FOUR SALES PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY CONSIDERED

IN LIGHT OF MAINTAINING STRATEGIC BALANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION HAS GIVEN NO INDICATION OF ENTERTAINING CHANGES IN NUMBERS OF AIRCRAFT INCLUDED IN THE SALES.

4. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER THE ADMINISTRATION IS BACKING OFF ITS PREVIOUS POSITION THAT ALL THE PROPOSALS FORM ONE PACKAGE, YOU SHOULD MAKE THE FOLLOWING TWO POINTS:

--THE ADMINISTRATION REMAINS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO EACH SALE.

--THE FINAL PARAGRAPH OF THE SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE SALES TO THE PRESS HAS PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE IN THIS REGARD:

QUOTE: ...THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESIDENT FOR THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS REQUIRES THAT HE RESERVE JUDGMENT ON THE ULTIMATE ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNTIL HE HAS HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE CONGRESS ON THE PROPOSALS ANNOUNCED TODAY.
END QUOTE.

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